

that cause disease in humans, livestock, and crops. This mirrors the President's request of \$40 million to support early detection surveillance to identify potential bioterrorism agents, announced by Secretary Thompson at today's hearing. Funds are necessary to encourage cooperative research agreements between the Federal Government, industry, and academic laboratories. The anthrax events of the past two weeks underscore the need for new detection methods and information-gathering systems. These funds will also support ongoing efforts to develop satellite-based remote sensing technologies to identify weather patterns that contribute to the spread of infectious disease and biological or chemical attacks. Finally, this funding is necessary to support the rigorous testing, verification, and calibration of new biological detection technologies.

The second piece of legislation, sponsored with my friend from West Virginia, Senator ROCKEFELLER, will provide the Department of Veterans Affairs with additional funds to develop training programs with community health care providers. We need to enhance the cooperation between crucial elements of our health care system included in the National Medical Disaster System. These increased funds will support expanded use of existing telecommunications systems to implement a telemedicine training program for VA staff and their community public health counterparts. Remote regions of our Nation need the assurance that local public health responders will have the training and information they need to protect and treat citizens in instances of biological terrorism.

The third bill, the Biosecurity Agriculture Terrorism Act, will enhance Federal efforts to prepare for and respond to acts of agricultural terrorism or naturally-occurring agricultural epidemics by prioritizing efforts, authorizing funding and establishing new policy guidelines. Planning, training, and communication are three cornerstones of the preparedness and mitigation measures that will support the people who initially respond to any agricultural terrorism incident. This bill tasks the Federal Emergency Management Agency to create an emergency response function for agricultural disaster within the Federal Response Plan. This would result in having response and recovery plans in effect in the unfortunate event of an actual agricultural terrorism incident.

Together, these three bills will make significant and necessary contributions to the urgent task of protecting our Nation from all forms of bioterrorism. We can discourage and detect the manufacture, distribution, and use of biological weapons. We can use the existing emergency communication infrastructure, emergency response training programs, and community partnerships within the 173 VA hospitals across the Nation to train both VA staff and local health care providers for bioterrorism

response. And, we can protect our national agriculture industry from attack with biological agents. I strongly encourage my colleagues' support as we move forward with this legislation.

By Mr. SANTORUM:

S. 1562. A bill to amend title 39, United States Code, with respect to cooperative mailings; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, today I am introducing legislation that will protect the right of charities, faith-based organizations, and other nonprofit groups to use the nonprofit mail rate for their fundraising activities.

The legislation clarifies ambiguities in the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970, PRA, which established a nonprofit mail rate for charities. In recent years, the United States Postal Service, USPS, has increasingly applied PRA regulations that disqualify nonprofits from entering into agreements with commercial printing and mailing businesses to produce and administer mailings. Because of this misapplication, the USPS has been forcing charities to pay the full commercial rate on some fundraising letters merely because they hire third parties to print and prepare them. The result is a 40 percent increase in postal costs for these charities.

My legislation would allow charities and faith-based organizations to share ownership of their mailing with commercial printing and mailing businesses and still qualify for the nonprofit mailing rate. In effect, it would permit charities to mail at nonprofit rates whether they prepare the mailing themselves or hire someone else to do it for them since the purpose of the mailing remains a nonprofit one. Representative DAN BURTON has introduced similar bipartisan legislation in the House of Representatives as H.R. 1169.

It is important to point out that this bill maintains existing federal law that prohibits unauthorized parties from using the nonprofit rate to sell goods or services by mail. Moreover, the legislation does not limit the USPS' authority to enforce any other section of federal postal law. The USPS has been consulted as a part of the development of the legislation.

This legislation will enable charities, churches, synagogues, educational, advocacy, and other nonprofit organizations to negotiate the best agreements they can for their fundraising programs. The net result will be lower fundraising costs and more funds being available for nonprofits to serve others. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to join me in support of this initiative.

By Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself, Mr. MILLER, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 1563. A bill to establish a coordination program of science-based countermeasures to address the threats of agricultural bioterrorism; to the Com-

mittee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce, along with my colleagues Senators COCHRAN, MILLER, and FEINSTEIN, the Agricultural Bioterrorism Countermeasures Act of 2001.

Due to the growing concerns about threats aimed at America's food supply and vital agricultural economies, I am introducing this legislation to identify, prepare for, and respond to such bioterrorist threats to our farms, ranches, livestock, poultry, crops, and food processing, packaging, and distribution facilities and systems.

As we continue the fight against terrorism, it is critical that we dedicate sufficient resources to bioterrorism, a growing threat which has the potential of putting the safety of the U.S. food supply at risk. The United States currently boasts the world's safest and most abundant and affordable food supply, which benefits our citizens and helps bolster our economy. Clearly, it would be devastating for the public to lose confidence in the safety of our food. We, as a Nation, must respond by developing the technology and implementing the countermeasures necessary to identify and quickly control these risks.

The potential threat of bioterrorism to the U.S. population and to our food supply has been recognized over the years, from the cold war to the gulf war. During the cold war, it was known that the former Soviet Union had a bio-weapons program that included bioagents aimed at agriculture, while during the gulf war our own soldiers have shown evidence of possible use of biological weapons. Meanwhile, in Japan, terrorists have already tried once to use chemical and bioagents on the subways. In addition, the recent outbreaks of foot and mouth disease in Europe and "mad-cow disease" have increased public awareness and concern about exotic diseases that may affect the public through agricultural infection.

The Agriculture Bioterrorism Countermeasures Act of 2001 will authorize the U.S. Department of Agriculture, USDA, to strengthen its capacities to identify, prepare for, and respond to a bioterrorist threat including an attack on the United States' food supply and agriculture. This bill will expand the capacity of the USDA to enhance inspection capability, implement new information technology, and develop methods for rapid detection and identification of plant and animal disease.

This legislation will also strengthen America's research and development capacity by promoting collaboration between organizations that are addressing the use of agricultural bioterrorism, such as the federal government, universities, and private sector. The USDA will establish a Consortium for Countermeasures Against Agricultural Bioterrorism to form long-term programs of research and development to enhance the biosecurity of U.S. agriculture. America's institutes of higher